

## **Development Control Committee** **28 April 2021**

### **Planning Application DC/21/0528/FUL – Haverhill House, Lower Downs Slade, Haverhill**

<b>Date registered:</b>	23 March 2021	<b>Expiry date:</b>	18 May 2021
<b>Case officer:</b>	Savannah Cobbold	<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approve Application
<b>Parish:</b>	Haverhill Town Council	<b>Ward:</b>	Haverhill Central
<b>Proposal:</b>	Planning application - a. external wall insulation to all elevations with coloured render finish b. replacement fenestration to the south east, north east and north west elevations c. replace one window on south west elevation		
<b>Site:</b>	Haverhill House, Lower Downs Slade, Haverhill		
<b>Applicant:</b>	c/o Agent		

**Synopsis:**

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and associated matters.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the committee determine the attached application and associated matters.

CONTACT CASE OFFICER:

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**Background:**

1. The application is referred to Development Control Committee as West Suffolk Council is the applicant.

**Proposal:**

2. The application seeks planning permission for external wall insulation to all elevations of Haverhill House and replacement fenestration on all elevations.

**Application supporting material:**

- Location and block plan
- Existing elevations
- Proposed elevations
- Covering letter
- Application form
- Flood risk questionnaire

**Site details:**

3. The application site is located within the settlement boundary for Haverhill. The site comprises a large building which currently accommodates an office use for public sector uses including citizens advice. The site whilst outside of the conservation area, borders this and therefore wider views will be visible from the conservation area of Haverhill.

**Planning history:**

4. No relevant planning history.

**Consultations:****Conservation Officer**

5. No objections.

**Representations:****Haverhill Town Council**

6. The Town Council provide a neutral stance.

**Neighbours**

7. At the time of writing this report, the consultation period is ongoing and therefore there is still opportunity for representations to be submitted. This matter will be updated in the late papers or verbally at the meeting, as appropriate.

**Policy:**

8. On 1 April 2019 Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council were replaced by a single authority, West Suffolk Council.

The development plans for the previous local planning authorities were carried forward to the new Council by regulation. The development plans remain in place for the new West Suffolk Council and, with the exception of the Joint Development Management Policies Document (which had been adopted by both councils), set out policies for defined geographical areas within the new authority. It is therefore necessary to determine this application with reference to policies set out in the plans produced by the now dissolved St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

9. The following policies of the Joint Development Management Policies Document and the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy 2010 & Vision 2031 have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

Vision Policy HV1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy DM1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy DM2 Creating Places Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness

Policy DM7 Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy DM8 Low and Zero Carbon Energy Generation

Policy DM17 Conservation Areas

Core Strategy Policy CS3 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

**Other planning policy:**

10. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

11. The NPPF was revised in February 2019 and is a material consideration in decision making from the day of its publication. Paragraph 213 is clear however, that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the revised NPPF. Due weight should be given to them according to their degree of consistency with the Framework; the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework; the greater weight that may be given. The policies set out within the Joint Development Management Policies have been assessed in detail and are considered sufficiently aligned with the provision of the 2019 NPPF that full weight can be attached to them in the decision making process.

**Officer comment:**

12. The issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Principle of development
- Impact on residential amenity
- Impact on street scene/character of the area
- Impact on conservation area

## Principle of development

13. The application seeks planning permission for external wall insulation to all elevations of Haverhill House with a rendered finish. It also seeks planning permission for replacement fenestration. The proposal will increase the thermal insulation value of the external fabric of Haverhill House in line with policy DM8 which supports proposals for the generation or recovery of low carbon or renewable energy. Given the location of the building, this is not considered to impact the wider landscape.
14. Policy DM7 deals with sustainable design and construction and states that proposals will be expected to adhere to broad principles of sustainable design and construction and optimise energy efficiency through the use of design, layout, orientation, materials, insulation and construction techniques. The proposal seeks to improve the insulation value of Haverhill House and which is therefore readily supported by this policy.
15. Development will need to be in accordance with policy DM2 and is generally acceptable provided that the proposal respects the character and appearance of the immediate and surrounding area, and providing that there is not an adverse impact upon residential amenity, highway safety or important trees within the street scene. Along with CS3, DM2 requires development to conserve and where possible enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the area.

## Impact on residential amenity

16. The proposed development is not considered to adversely impact upon the residential amenity of occupants of nearby properties given the location of the building. The building is located within the town centre boundary for Haverhill, at the end of Queens Street. Buildings within this area are predominantly of a commercial nature with a dentist and barbers located towards the north of the building and a phone repair shop towards the south east. A public house sits on the opposite side of the road, towards the north east of the building and directly opposite. 1-4 Lower Downs Slade is also listed as commercial offices and studios. Whilst number 5 Francis Close is the closest residential dwelling to the site, this is located approximately 14 metres from the site. Noting the nature of the works this is considered to be a satisfactory distance, with a walkway/road separating these. Furthermore, the boundary of this neighbouring dwelling is marked by a boundary fence.
17. The proposal is for external changes only, including rendering the building and replacing the fenestration; no additional structures are being proposed. Given this and the nature of the proposal, no harm is considered to arise upon the residential amenity of occupants of nearby dwellings.

## Impact on street scene/character of the area

18. The building itself is large in scale and therefore views are readily achieved from the wider area, including Wrattling Road, Withersfield Road and Queens Street. Whilst the proposal is changing the external appearance of the building, the building holds no real architectural merit, and the works are considered to improve the visual aesthetic attributed to the building by

updating the appearance and replacing the windows. The area is characterised by various units and premises, some listed; all vary in appearance. No harm is considered to arise upon the street scene as a result of this proposal.

19. Whilst the plans show the colour of the render to be used, white/cream, the plans do not show the colour of the windows. This however is detailed within the application to be dark blue and therefore, a condition has been added to ensure compliance with materials shown on the proposed elevations and application form.

#### Impact on conservation area

20. The conservation area boundary runs directly along the north east and north west elevation, placing Haverhill House directly outside of the conservation area. The LPA has a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and policy DM17 states that proposals for development within, adjacent to or visible from a conservation area should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The existing building is widely visible from the conservation area which areas along Withersfield Road and Queens Street are contained within.
21. The proposed development is not located on a building which is listed nor located within the conservation area, however it is adjacent to the boundary of such. The proposed development relates to a modern building of no historic interest from a conservation point of view and the proposed works will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area. No objections are offered by the conservation officer.

#### Conclusion:

22. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### Recommendation:

23. It is recommended that planning permission be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the following approved plans and documents:

<b>Drawing No.</b>	<b>Plan type</b>	<b>Date received</b>
10918 10	Existing elevations	11 March 2021
10918 11 A	Proposed elevations	11 March 2021

10918 12

Location and block  
plan  
Application form

11 March 2021

11 March 2021

Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed entirely of the materials detailed on the submitted plan / drawing No.(s) – application form and proposed elevations.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy DM2 of the West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015, Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and all relevant Core Strategy Policies.

**Documents:**

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online [DC/21/0528/FUL](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/DC/21/0528/FUL)